

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Elk Point Jefferson School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2005-2006**

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Dates of On Site Visit: March 14 & 15, 2006

Date of Report: March 27, 2006

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
Meets Requirements	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
Needs Improvement	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
Out of Compliance	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
Not applicable	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data Sources used:

- B – District/Agency Instructional Staff Information
- C – Suspension and Expulsion Information
- D – Statewide Assessment Information
- E – Enrollment Information
- F – Placement Alternatives

G – Disabling Conditions
H – Exiting Information
Parent Survey, Referrals, Publications of Child Find Notices
Comprehensive Plan
Yearly Child Find Results

Meets Requirements

The steering committee reports the district's child find activities are implemented annually. The district does have a special needs preschool which is with the Head Start Program. There are no private schools in the district. All special education staff meets bi-weekly to discuss students that may need services. Regular education teachers are invited to the meeting with their concerns for students. Parents are invited to training programs offered to teachers on issues of special education.

Validation Results

Promising practices:

Through observations and interviews the monitoring team identified the following as promising practices: The Success Maker Program is used for all students in grades 3 thru 8. The students go to the lab five days a week for 30 minutes each day for math and reading.

The district has a homework lab for students in grades 3 thru 8. There is homework help 3 days a week after school.

The middle school students in the life skills class do cleaning for local businesses for jobs before they enter project skills.

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the steering committee data for Principle One, General Supervision as meeting the requirements.

Out of Compliance

ARSD 24:05:17:03 Annual report of children served

The monitoring team was unable to validate an IEP was in effect on December 1st, 2004 for one student who was listed on the district's 2004 child count.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data Sources Used:

B – District Instructional Staff Information
C – Suspension and Expulsion Information
E – Enrollment Information
F – Placement Alternatives
K – Early Intervention (Part C) Exit Information
L – Complaints
M – Hearings
N – Monitoring

1. Numbers of children screened
2. Preschool age
3. School-age
4. Age at referral
5. Student progress data
6. Personnel development information
7. Number of referrals that do not result in evaluation
8. District records of release to outside agencies
9. Needs assessment information
10. Personnel training
11. Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee reported the provision of a free appropriate public education for all children.

Needs Improvement

The steering committee reported a need to improve record management.

Validation Results**Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with the steering committee data for Principle Two, Free Appropriate Public Education as meeting the requirements.

Needs Improvement

The monitoring team agrees with the steering committee data to improve record management.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data Sources Used:

G – Disabling Conditions
H- Exiting Information
I – Placement by Age
J – Placement by Disabling Condition
L – Complaints
M – Hearings
N – Monitoring

1. Teacher file reviews
 - Prior notice
 - Telephone log
 - Evaluation report
2. Exit and re-entry into special education
3. Number of placement committee overrides
4. Surveys
5. General curriculum information
6. Comprehensive plan
7. Initial referral log
8. Needs assessment information
9. Personnel training
10. Budget information
11. List of languages represented in the district (includes sign language and Braille)
12. List of interpreters/signers used in the district
13. Personnel with designated certification

Meets Requirement

The steering committee concluded the district uses a team of people including the referring person, special education teacher, school psychologist, and related service providers to determine areas to be evaluated. A multidisciplinary team report is developed for all students. Parents receive copies of test results. Those results are explained to the parents and are used to develop the Individual Education Program (IEP).

Needs Improvement

The steering committee concluded the district needs to change the Multidisciplinary Team Report to make it more detailed.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring agrees that the district uses a team of people including the referring person, special education teacher, school psychologist and related service providers to determine areas to be evaluated. A multidisciplinary team report is developed for all students. Parents receive copies of test results. Those results are explained to the parents and are used to develop the individual education program (IEP).

Needs Improvement

The monitoring team found the following areas as needing improvement. The district has changed the MDT form and needs to change one area for compliance. The form must include the statement that the disability is not correctable without special education.

Five files did not have parent participation into the evaluation process.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data Sources Used:

L – Complaints

M – Hearings

1. Teacher file reviews
2. Surveys
3. Comprehensive plan
4. Parental rights document
5. Consent and prior notice forms
6. Needs assessment information
7. Public awareness information
8. Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) disclosure
9. Review of access logs
10. Personnel training
11. Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee stated parents were provided with the parent rights booklet in accordance with regulation 100% of the time. The steering committee noted parents have been fully informed in their native language or another mode of communication of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought and a surrogate parent is appointed if no parent can be identified. Parents of children in need of special education and related services are afforded the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records concerning the identification, evaluation and educational placement of the child and the provision of a free appropriate public education.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through the review of data tables and staff interviews, the monitoring team found the district has not had a due process hearing within the last six years. The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements for procedural safeguards as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas

addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data Sources Used:

K – Early Intervention (Part C) Exit Information
L – Complaints
M – Hearings
N – Monitoring
Comprehensive plan
Teacher file reviews
Student progress data
Personnel development information
Needs assessment information
Personnel training
Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee reports policies and procedures are in place to ensure an IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student. The district uses the Campus program developed by the state. Teachers are made aware of all goals and modifications needed in the regular classroom. Present levels of performance contain specific skills in the student's strengths, weakness and the student's involvement in the general curriculum. Goals are linked to present levels of performance.

Needs Improvement

The steering team concluded that the district needs to start inviting other agencies to IEP meetings.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees an IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student. Teachers are made aware of all goals and modifications needed in the regular classroom.

Out of compliance

24:05:27:13:02 Transition services

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a student designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

The monitoring team determined transition did not contain a set of coordinated set of activities for students that promotes movement from school to post school activities. The district used the Enderle Severson for evaluation; however, the information is not included in the present levels of performance and not linked to goals. Thirteen out of eighteen students did not have transition addressed in the present levels of performance. Transition justification statements are included; however, the service recommendations are all the same, and there is no activity listed.

24:05:27:01.03. Content of Individualized Education Program. Each student's individualized education program shall include:

- (1) A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance, including:
 - (a) How the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled students); or
- (2) A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to:
 - (b) To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with this section and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
 - (c) To be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students in the activities described in this section;
- (4) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class and in activities described in this section;

Thirteen out of eighteen files reviewed did not have measurable annual goals. For example; “Will increase his reading skills in the following benchmarks.” “Will analyze the structural characteristics of the real number system and its various subsystems.”

Transition was not addressed in 13/18 files in the present levels of performance. Three files had no parent input addressed and six files did not show how the student’s disability affects the student’s involvement and progress in the general curriculum.

24:05:27:08. Yearly review and revision of individual educational programs. Each school district shall initiate and conduct IEP team meetings to periodically review each child's individual educational program and, if appropriate, revise its provisions. An IEP team meeting must be held for this purpose at least once a year. The review shall be conducted to determine whether the annual goals for the student are being achieved. The individualized education program shall be revised, as appropriate, to address: any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals and in general curriculum; the results of any reevaluation conducted; information about the student provided to, or by, the parents; the student's anticipated needs; or other matters.

Six students were identified by the monitoring team to not meet the deadline for annual review dates.

ARSD 24:05:28:02 Continuum of alternative placements

The IEP team must address the justification for placement through a statement in the IEP. This statement must include an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with non-disabled children in the general classroom and in extracurricular and non-academic activities.

Sixteen justification statements did not address the required content. The accept/reject format was not used in all files and seven files were left blank with no statements. The question why the student can not participate in the regular classroom was not addressed in all files.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data Sources Used:

B – Instructional Staff Information
E – Enrollment Information
F – Placement Alternatives
G – Disabling Conditions
I – Placement by Age
J – Placement by Disabling Condition
L – Complaints
M – Hearings
N – Monitoring

1. File reviews
2. Parent, Student, General educator surveys
3. General curriculum information
4. Age at placement
5. Needs assessment information
6. Personnel training
7. Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the school district provides procedures for determining placement options using the continuum of alternative placements. LRE considerations are applied to all students' birth through twenty one.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under least restrictive environment.